इन सभी केन्द्रों से उम्मीद की जाती है कि वे छात्रों, अध्यापकों, विद्वानों और सांस्कृतिक क्षेत्र से सम्बद्ध लोगों सहित स्थानीय नागरिकों के एक व्यापक समूह के साथ सम्पर्क विकसित करें और उसे बनाए रखें।

(ग) और (घ) जी हां। ताशकन्द (उजबेकिस्तान) और अल्माती (कजाकिस्तान) में सांस्कृतिक केन्द्र खोलने का प्रस्ताव है।

Visit to India By French Senate Committee Delegation

1058. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether some delegation of the French Senate Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Armed Forces has recently visited India;

(b) if so, what are the details there of with background for such a move;

(c) whether India has gained something with this visit; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The visit of the French Senate delegation from 7 - 14 February 1994 was at their own initiative, within the framework of strengthening bilateral interaction.

(c) and (d) The visit provided a useful opportunity to intensify our dialogue with France at the level of Parliamentarians as well as to convey our perceptions and concerns on various issues, particularly those related to the problem of Pak-sponsored terrorism. The visit is expected to impart further momentum to Indo-French relations in the political, economic and cultural fields.

Divisional Passport Office At Pune

1059. SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI :
SHRI RADHAKISHAN MALAVIYA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a demand for opening of a Divisional Passport Office at Pune for Western and Southern Maharashtra and Maharashtra regions;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and

(c) what action has been taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL ARRAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) to (c) Requests have been received for opening more Passport Offices in various States and Union Territories, including Pune in Maharashtra State.

The opening of new Passport Offices is based on various parameters including work load and resources available. The opening of a new Passport Office does not itself improve the service until the necessary infrastructure and personnel are available. The Govt. is, therefore, concentrating on clearing the backlog of pending applications, trying to cut down on delay in issuing passports and streamlining and simplifying procedures.

Shortage of Passport Booklets

1060. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI :
SHRI RADHAKISHAN MALAVIYA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a shortage of passport booklets in Ahmedabad, Bhopal and other Regional Passport Offices; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to improve the situation ?